



Press Release for Earth Hour

Announcement of 2009 Reel Earth environmental film festival

Palmerston North, NZL – 26 March 2009

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The cream of a \$50M global crop of new documentary films and animations are set to make their premieres in New Zealand during the 5th season of the Reel Earth Environmental Film Festival.

The complete programme of Reel Earth's 55 selections will be revealed during Earth Hour this Saturday night.

"Earth Hour channels global awareness. Reel Earth expands it, providing a voice for the planet and celebrating her ecology" says Festival Director Brent Barrett. Reel Earth encompasses a range of themes from natural history and wildlife through to hard hitting documentaries.

Heading the big budget titles is the \$10M *Wild Oceans*, shot on large format off the wild southern coast of West Africa. Another high profile title is Sundance nominee *Crude*, the latest offering from award winning director Joe Berlinger (*Metallica: Some Kind of Monster*, *Brother's Keeper*). Berlinger takes the viewer front and centre in the high-stakes chase to bring big oil companies to justice in the Amazon rainforests.

Over forty films from twenty-three countries will be screened in Palmerston North before touring the country. A gala opening, featuring film, music and awards, will be held to open Reel Earth on 16 May at the Regent Theatre in Palmerston North.

The Festival Director, Brent Barrett, said the decision to hold a gala opening at the Regent was made to broaden the appeal of the festival.

"While most people care deeply about the planet, we know we're competing with other activities in busy lives so we're going high profile, high impact with a gala opening complete with celebrity star power and live music. We aim to attract the nation's attention to the premieres of these outstanding global films"

The festival season continues through May in Palmerston North before touring New Zealand. Tickets to the gala opening will be available from TicketDirect in April. Festival season tickets will be available from Downtown Cinemas. For further information about the festival visit www.reearth.org.nz